

Amendments to the Claims

Please cancel claims 1-2, 4-7, 15 and 17. The currently pending claims after amendment are listed below.

1 - 7. (Cancelled)

1 8. (Previously Presented) A method for performing instant messaging in a first computer
2 system attached to a network of computer systems, comprising the steps of:

3 receiving incoming instant messages for a first user in said first computer system from
4 users of other computer systems attached to said network, said other computer systems attached to
5 said network executing respective instant messaging applications;

6 sending outgoing instant messages to said respective instant messaging applications
7 executing in said other computer systems attached to said network;

8 receiving a request for availability status of said first user from an instant messaging
9 application executing in a second computer system attached to said network; and

10 responsive to receiving said request for availability status, reporting availability status of
11 said first user to said instant messaging application executing in said second computer system
12 attached to said network, wherein said step of reporting availability status comprises
13 automatically inferring whether said first user is available by calling a calendar application to
14 access calendar data concerning said first user stored in at least one calendar data file maintained
15 by said calendar application, said calendar application being an application independent of said
16 instant messaging application.

1 9. (Original) The method for performing instant messaging of claim 8, wherein said step of
2 reporting availability further comprises automatically inferring whether said first user is available
3 from at least one indicium of availability from the set consisting of: (a) whether the first computer
4 has received any input from the first user within a predetermined time period; and (b) whether the
5 first computer is in a locked state.

10. (Cancelled)

1 11. (Previously Presented) The method for performing instant messaging of claim 8, wherein
2 said availability status includes a reason for inferring unavailability.

1 12. (Original) The method for performing instant messaging of claim 8, wherein said calendar
2 data includes normal hours of availability.

1 13. (Original) The method for performing instant messaging of claim 8, wherein said calendar
2 data includes events.

1 14. (Original) The method for performing instant messaging of claim 8, wherein said network
2 is the Internet, and wherein:

3 said incoming instant messages are received from an Internet server;
4 said outgoing instant messages are sent to said Internet server; and
5 said availability status is reported to said Internet server.

15 - 17. (Cancelled)